REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The subject invention as defined by amended independent claims 22 and 28 relates to a diode laser module including a carrier element supporting a laser diode assembly defined by a linear array of laser diodes. An array of optical transport fibers are mounted on holder which is in turn mounted on the carrier. The holder is mounted in a manner to define a gap between the array of optical fibers and the laser diode assembly. A cylindrical lens is attached to the end of the transport fibers and is positioned entirely in the gap between the carrier and the diode assembly. Mounting the lens in the gap between the carrier and the diode assembly and attaching it only to the transport fibers rather than mounting the lens on the carrier is more kinematic and reduces stresses that might be created in the lens.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 22 to 24 and 26 and 27 as being obvious based on the patent to d'Auria (4,147,403) and Hall (5,343,548). As noted by the Examiner, d'Auria teaches a holder for supporting optical transport fibers. D'Auria also teaches mounting a cylindrical fiber lens 3 adjacent the input ends of the transport fibers. D'Auria also teaches that this assembly can be mounted so that light from a plurality of laser diodes can be directed into the transport fibers.

The Examiner relies on the patent to Hall for its teaching of a common carrier for supporting the laser diodes and the holder for the optical transport fibers.

The Examiner also argues that d'Auria teaches that a gap exists between laser diode array and the fiber holder since the "lens extends beyond the edge of the fiber holder." While it may be true that a gap exists between the fiber holder and the laser diode array of the d'Auria device, this comment misses an important point. More specifically, in applicant's invention, as defined in the amended claims, the cylindrical lens is located "***entirely*** in the gap between the holder and the diode laser assembly" and therefore is not in contact with or supported in any way by the carrier. In contrast, and as noted by the Examiner, in d'Auria, the cylindrical lens is supported either directly or indirectly by the holder and at most, overhangs carrier and only partially extends into the gap. This distinction is not trivial. As noted above, applicant expressly intends that the cylindrical lens be separate from the carrier to make its connection to the transport fibers more kinematic and not subject to stresses associated with being supported by the carrier. D'Auria teaches exactly the opposite, that the cylindrical lens be supported by the carrier and not

float in the gap. Accordingly, one skilled in the art would not be inclined to modify d'Auria to move the fiber out away from the carrier and entirely into the gap.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the patents to d'Auria and Hall, whether taken alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest applicant's claimed invention which requires that the cylindrical lens be mounted "entirely in the gap between the holder and the diode laser assembly."

In the Office Action, the Examiner relied on the patent to Dakss (4,269,648) for its teaching of attaching a lens to the end of a fiber using a bead of glue. Dakss, which relates to single fiber assemblies, does not at all address the deficiencies of d'Auria and Hall as discussed above. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 22 and 28 define patentable subject matter and allowance thereof, along with the claims depending therefrom is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

STALLMAN & POLLOCK LLP

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By: _____

Michael A. Stallman
Reg. No. 29,444

Attorneys for Applicant(s)